



Data Digest: Alabama

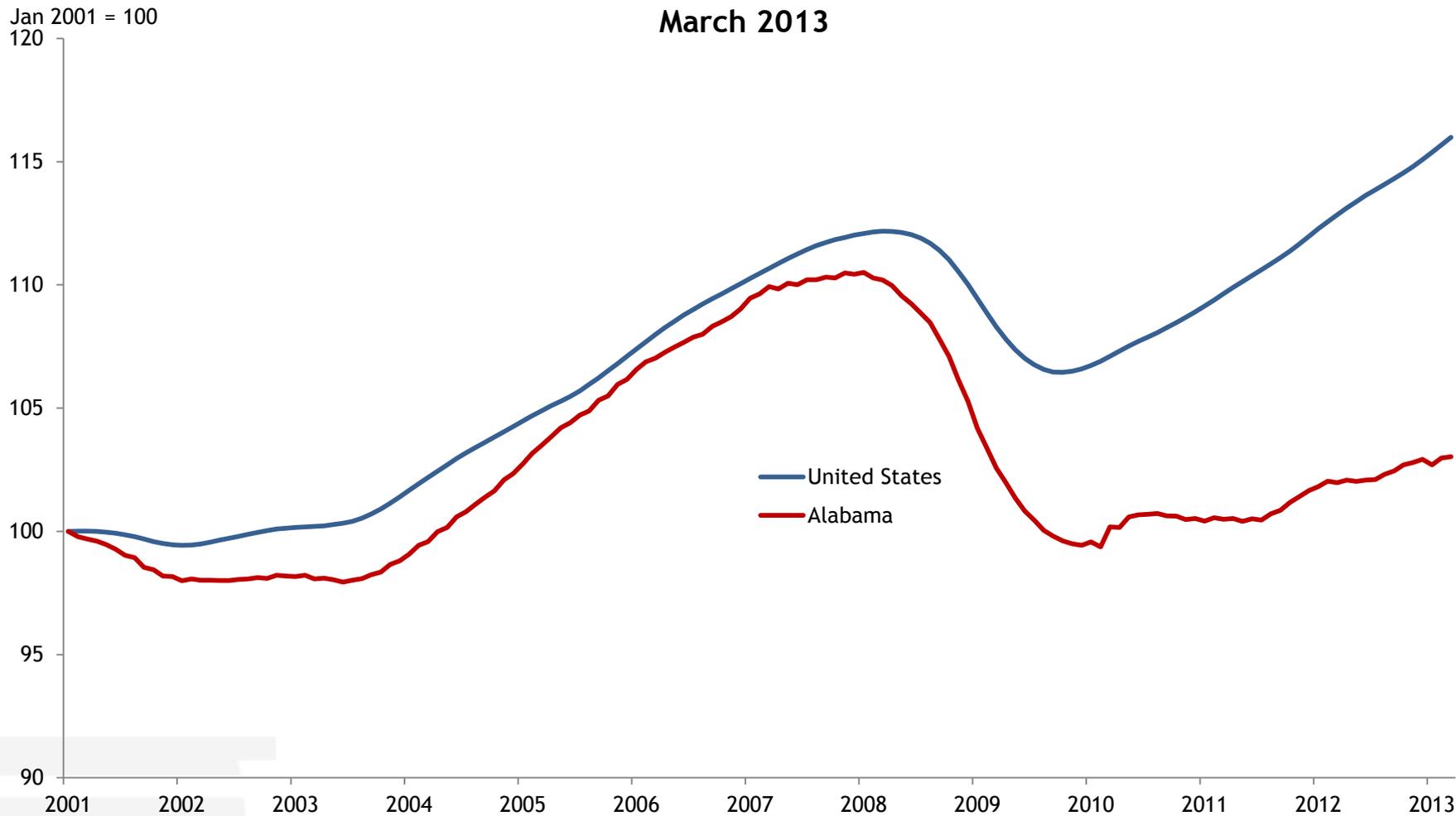
May 2013



Broad indicators of economic activity for Alabama remain well below the indicators for the United States.

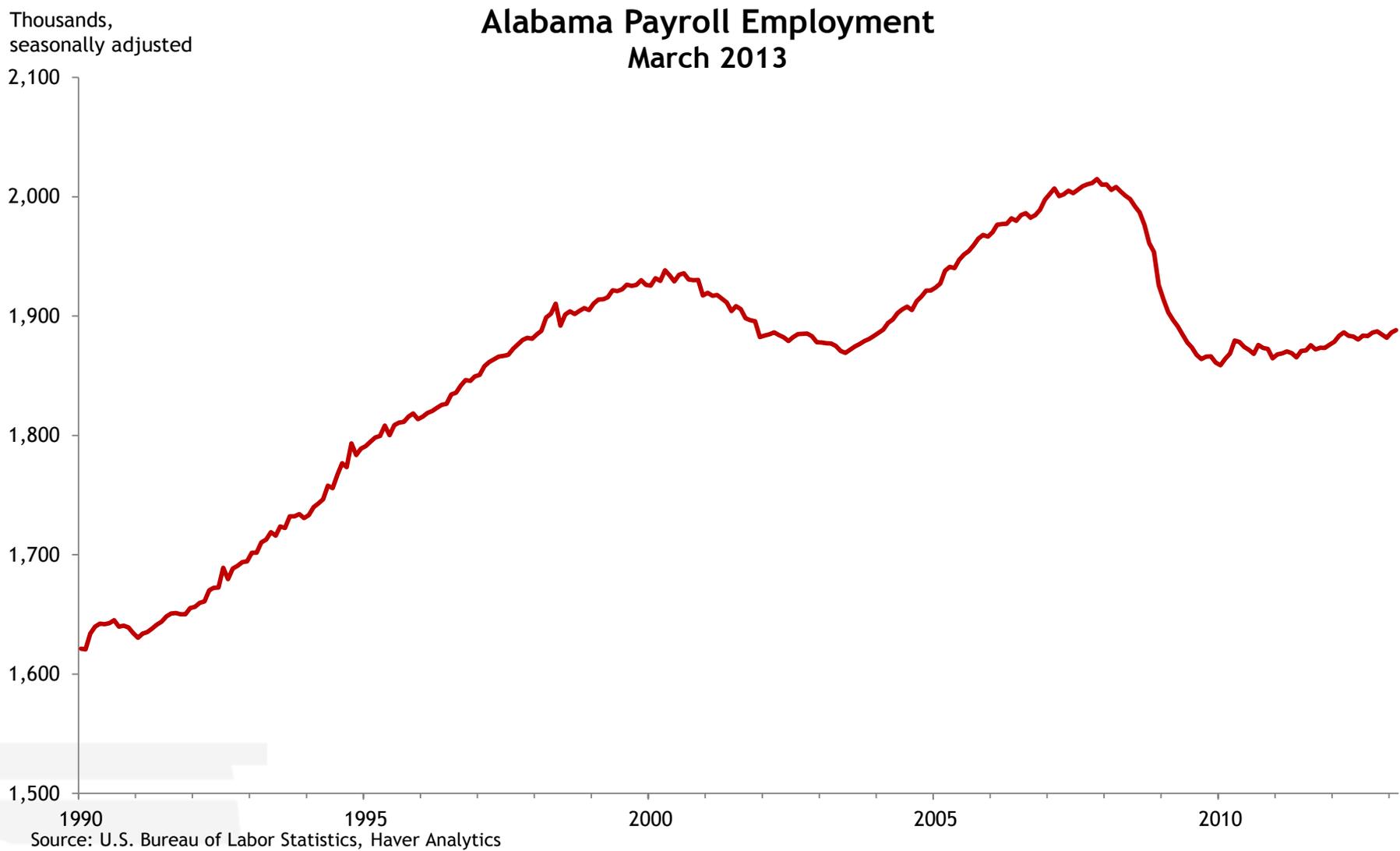
[About the Coincident Economic Indicator](#)

Coincident Economic Indicator March 2013



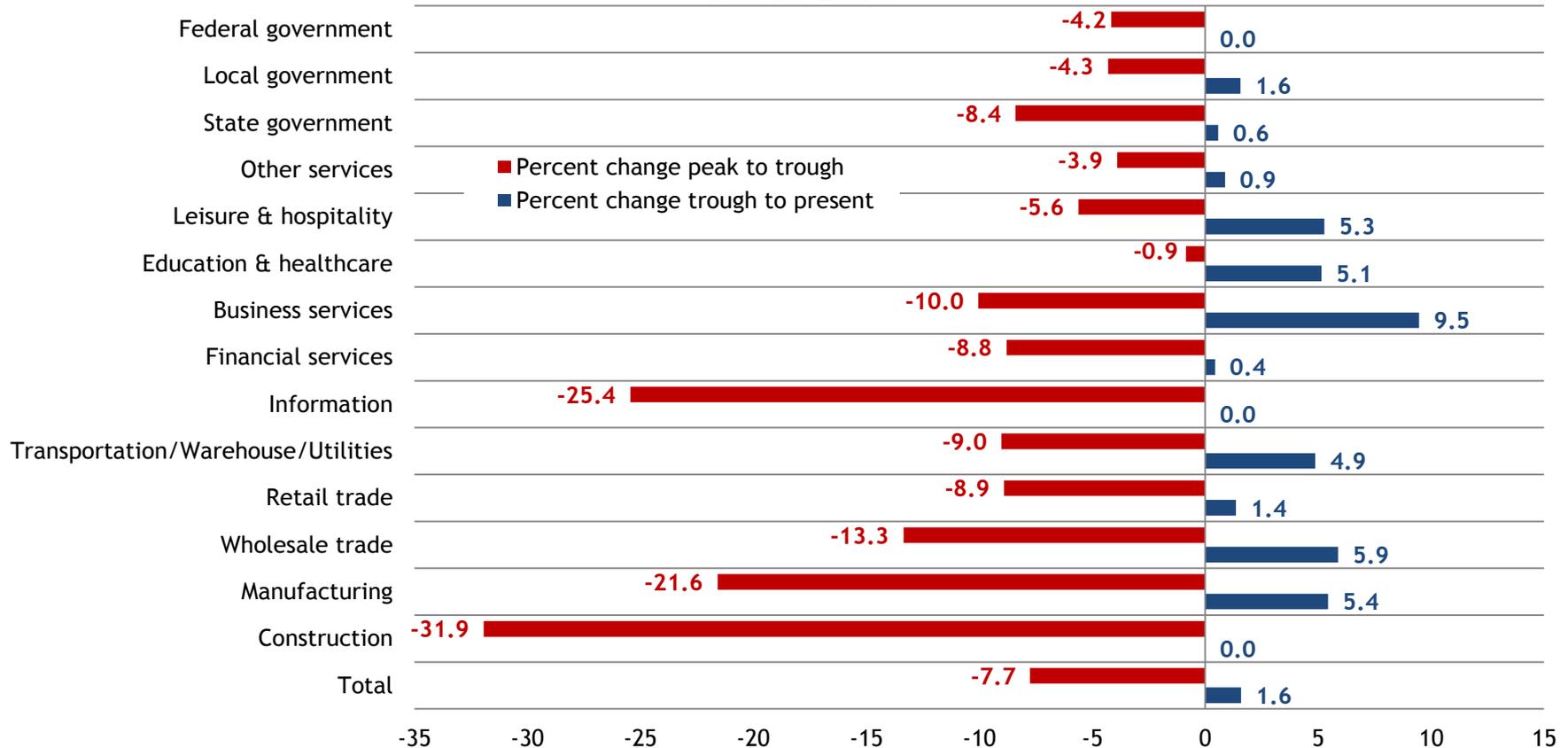
Source: Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

Total employment in Alabama has increased slightly during the first three months of 2013, but it continues to be well below prerecession levels.



All industries lost jobs during the downturn. The construction industry was the hardest hit, losing more than 31 percent of its jobs. Many sectors have seen job gains since their troughs, with business services experiencing the largest increase. Federal government, information, and construction continue to lose jobs.

Employment Loss and Gain by Industry: Alabama March 2013



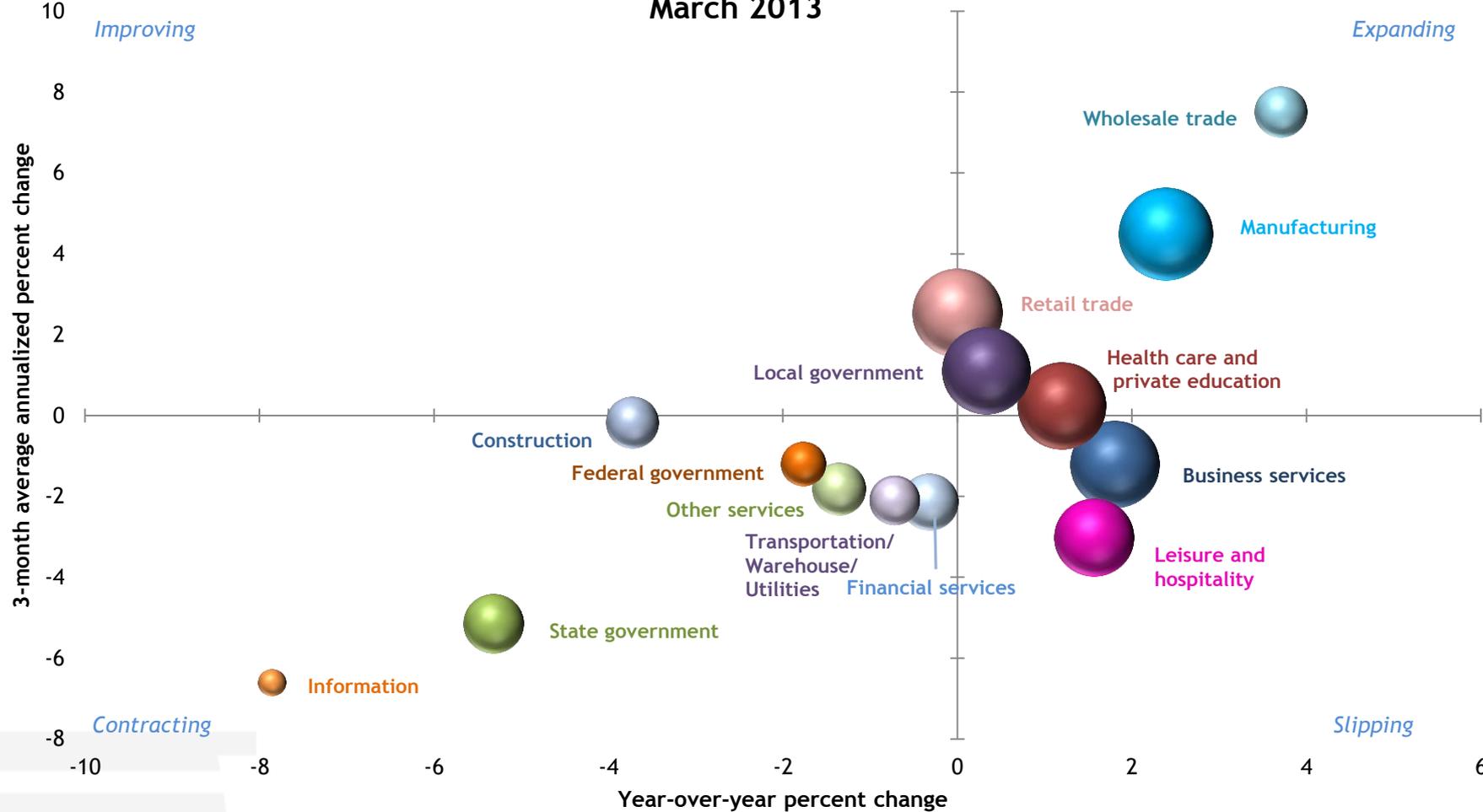
Note: A reading of 0.0 in the “trough to present” measure indicates that employment continues to decline in these industries. Likewise, a reading of 0.0 in the “peak to trough” measure indicates that employment continues to increase in these industries; in this instance “trough to present” is the percent change from January 2007 to present.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Employment momentum in manufacturing and wholesale trade, and to a lesser extent, health care and private education, retail trade, and local government, expanded in March. Many other sectors contracted or slipped in March; state government and information continued to be the weakest sectors.

[About Employment Momentum](#)

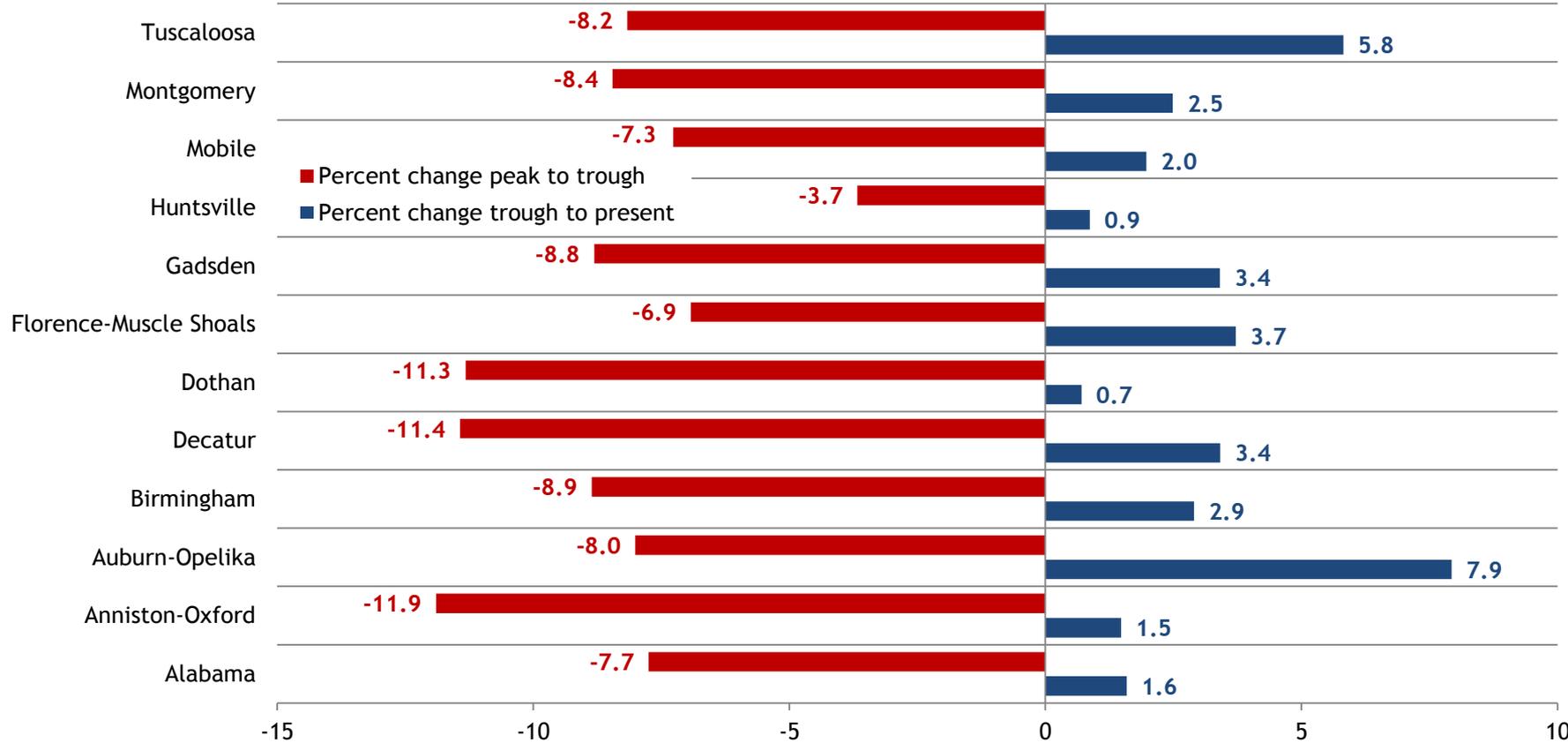
Employment Momentum by Industry: Alabama March 2013



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Job losses occurred throughout the state during the downturn, but each of Alabama's metro areas has slowly begun to rebound, with Auburn-Opelika and Tuscaloosa leading the pack.

Employment Loss and Gain by Metro Area: Alabama March 2013



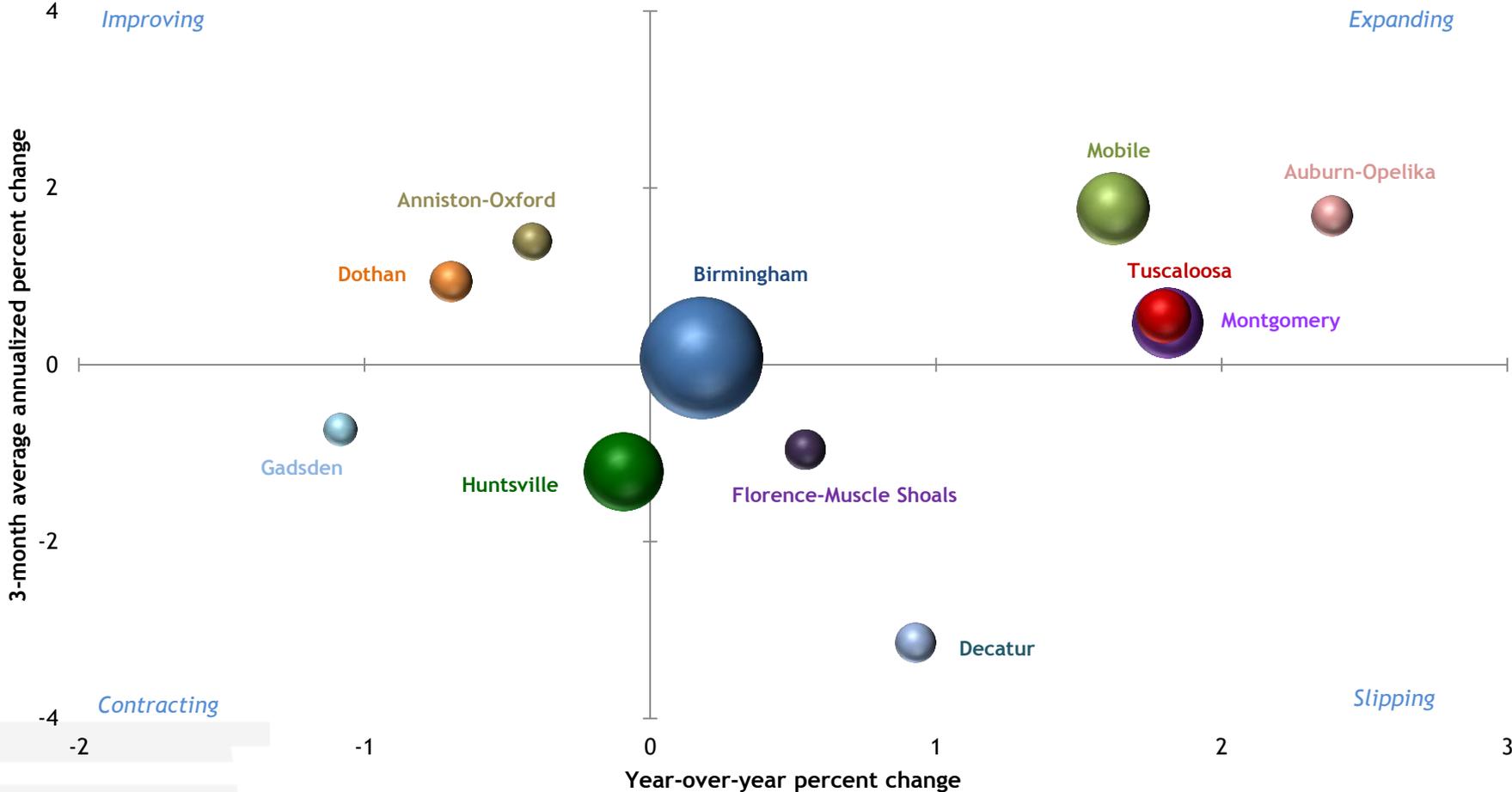
Note: A reading of 0.0 in the “trough to present” measure indicates that employment continues to decline in these metro areas. Likewise, a reading of 0.0 in the “peak to trough” measure indicates that employment continues to increase in these metro areas; in this instance “trough to present” is the percent change from January 2007 to present.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Employment momentum in Birmingham and several of Alabama's smaller metro areas expanded in March. Anniston-Oxford and Dothan remained in the "improving" quadrant while momentum for Huntsville and Gadsden contracted.

[About Employment Momentum](#)

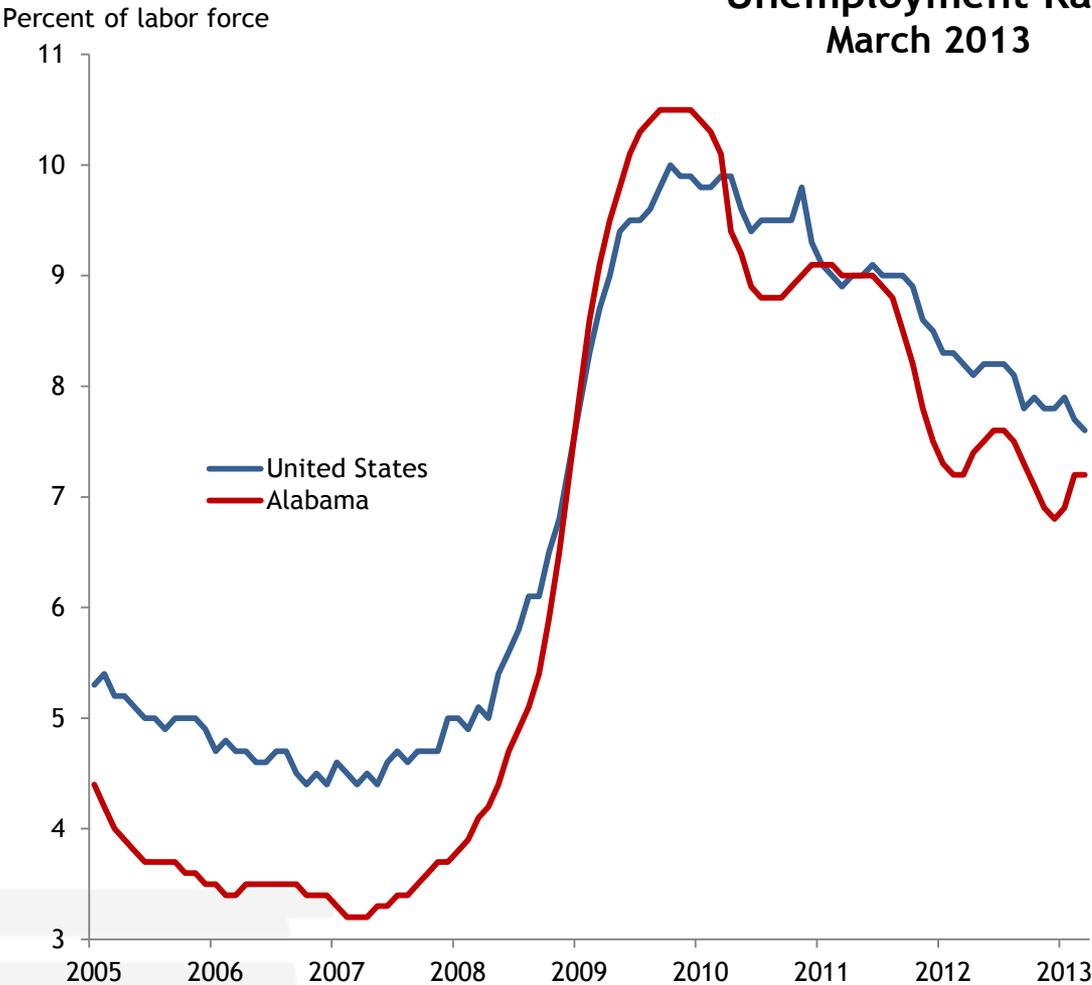
Employment Momentum by Metro Area: Alabama March 2013



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Until the recession, Alabama's unemployment rate was well below the U.S. rate. Alabama's unemployment rate has been lower than the national rate since mid-2011.

Unemployment Rate
March 2013



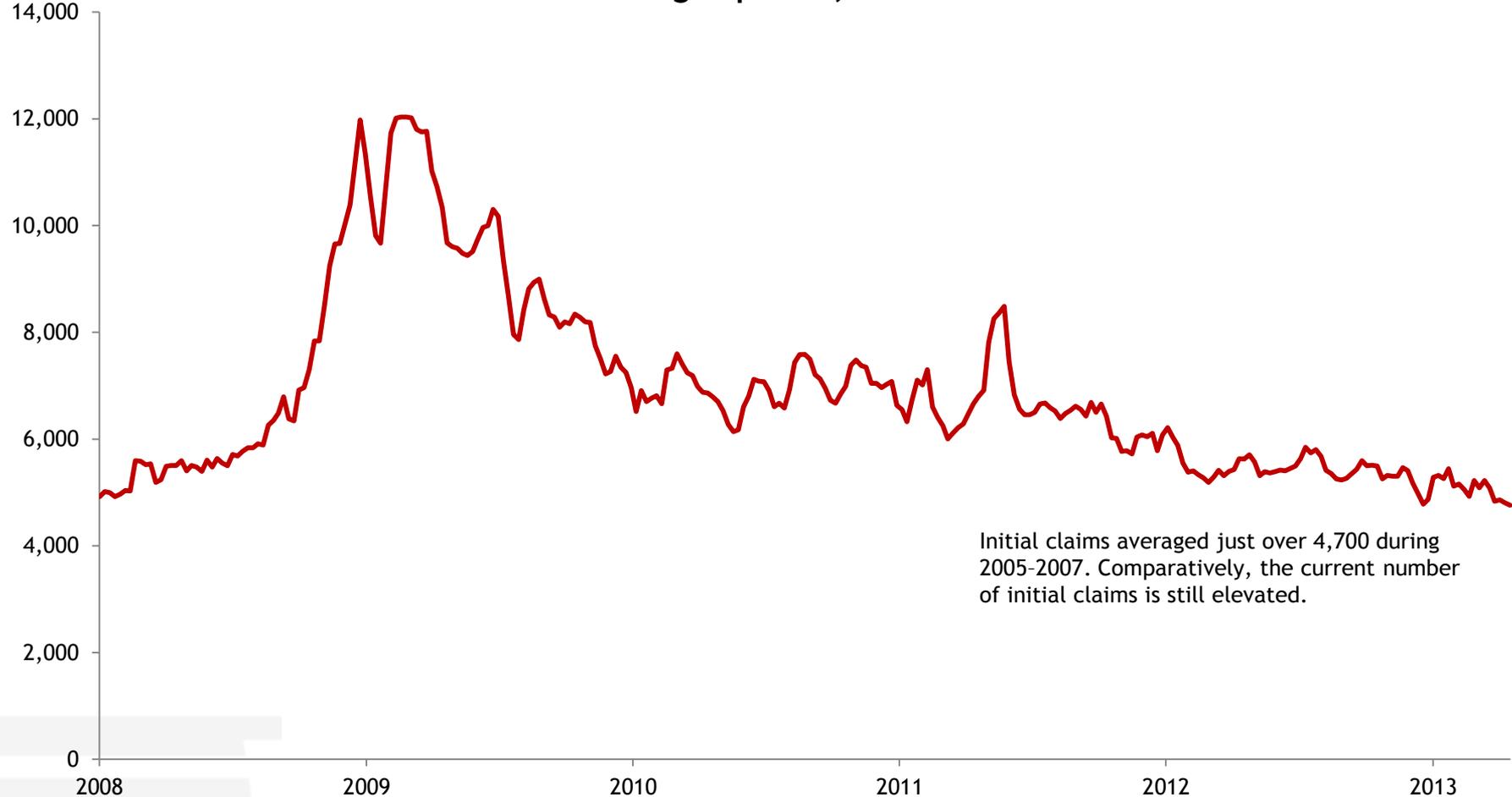
Unemployment Rates			
	Current	Year Ago	Jan 2007
United States	7.6	8.2	4.6
Alabama	7.2	7.2	3.3
Anniston-Oxford	7.1	7.4	3.4
Auburn-Opelika	5.8	6.2	3.4
Birmingham	6.0	6.3	3.2
Decatur	6.8	7.4	3.5
Dothan	6.6	6.7	3.2
Florence-Muscle Shoals	6.4	6.8	4.1
Gadsden	6.9	6.9	4.0
Huntsville	6.0	6.2	2.9
Mobile	8.0	8.4	3.5
Montgomery	7.0	7.4	3.6
Tuscaloosa	6.4	6.8	3.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics

The number of individuals filing initial claims for unemployment insurance decreased over the last month.

Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims: Alabama through April 20, 2013

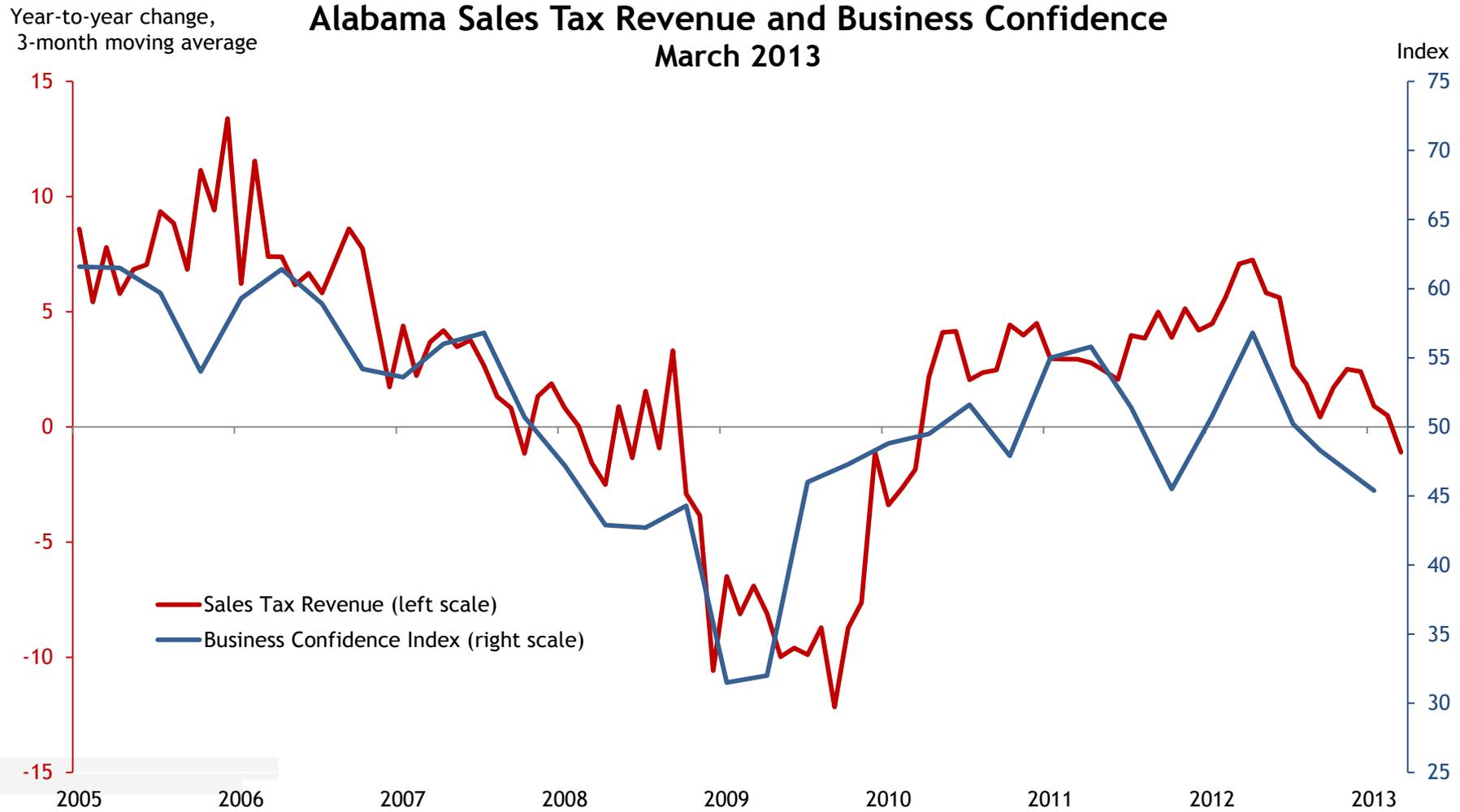
4-week moving average



Initial claims averaged just over 4,700 during 2005-2007. Comparatively, the current number of initial claims is still elevated.

Source: U.S Department of Labor–Employment and Training Administration, Haver Analytics

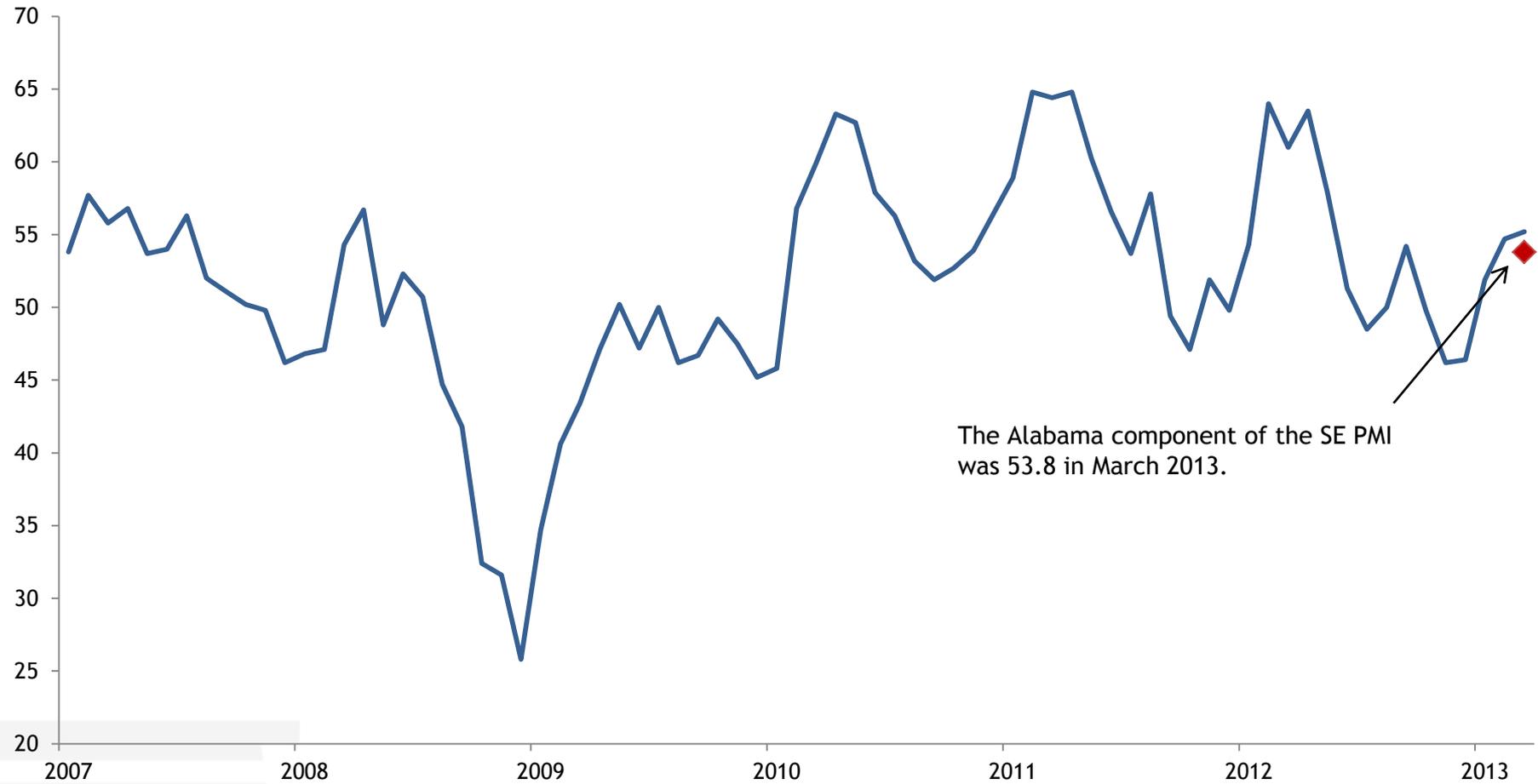
Business sentiment, as measured by the University of Alabama's first quarter 2013 survey, fell further into negative territory. Sales tax revenue experienced negative year-over-year growth as well.



Note: Sales tax data are through March 2013; Business Confidence Index as of first quarter 2013.
 Source: Alabama Department of Revenue, University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Regional manufacturing activity expanded for the third consecutive month in March, according to the Southeast Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) produced by Kennesaw State University. The overall regional reading of 55.2 was in expansionary territory and Alabama's component of the PMI stood at 53.8.

Southeast Purchasing Managers Index March 2013

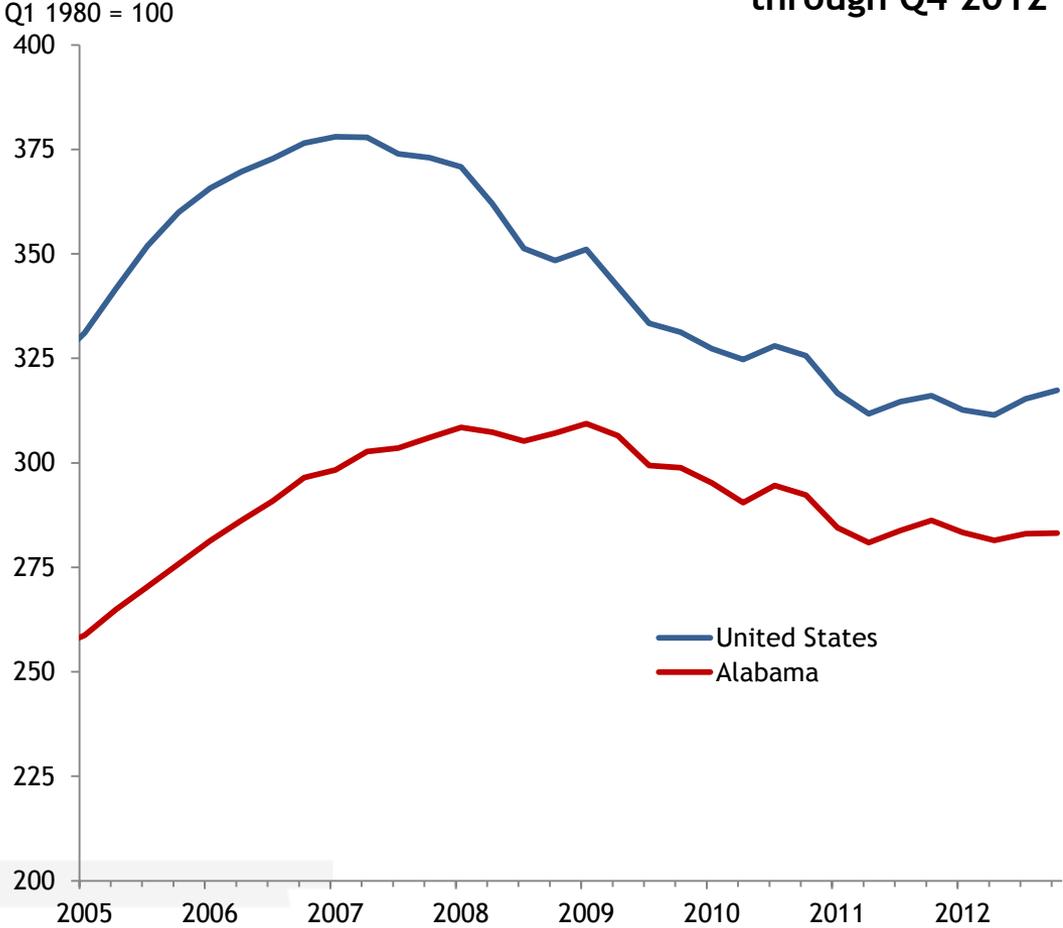


Note: 50+ = Expansion

Source: Kennesaw State University, Coles College of Business Econometric Center

Home prices for Alabama remained basically flat in the fourth quarter. U.S. housing prices increased slightly in both the third and fourth quarters of 2012.

Federal Housing Finance Agency Home Price Index through Q4 2012



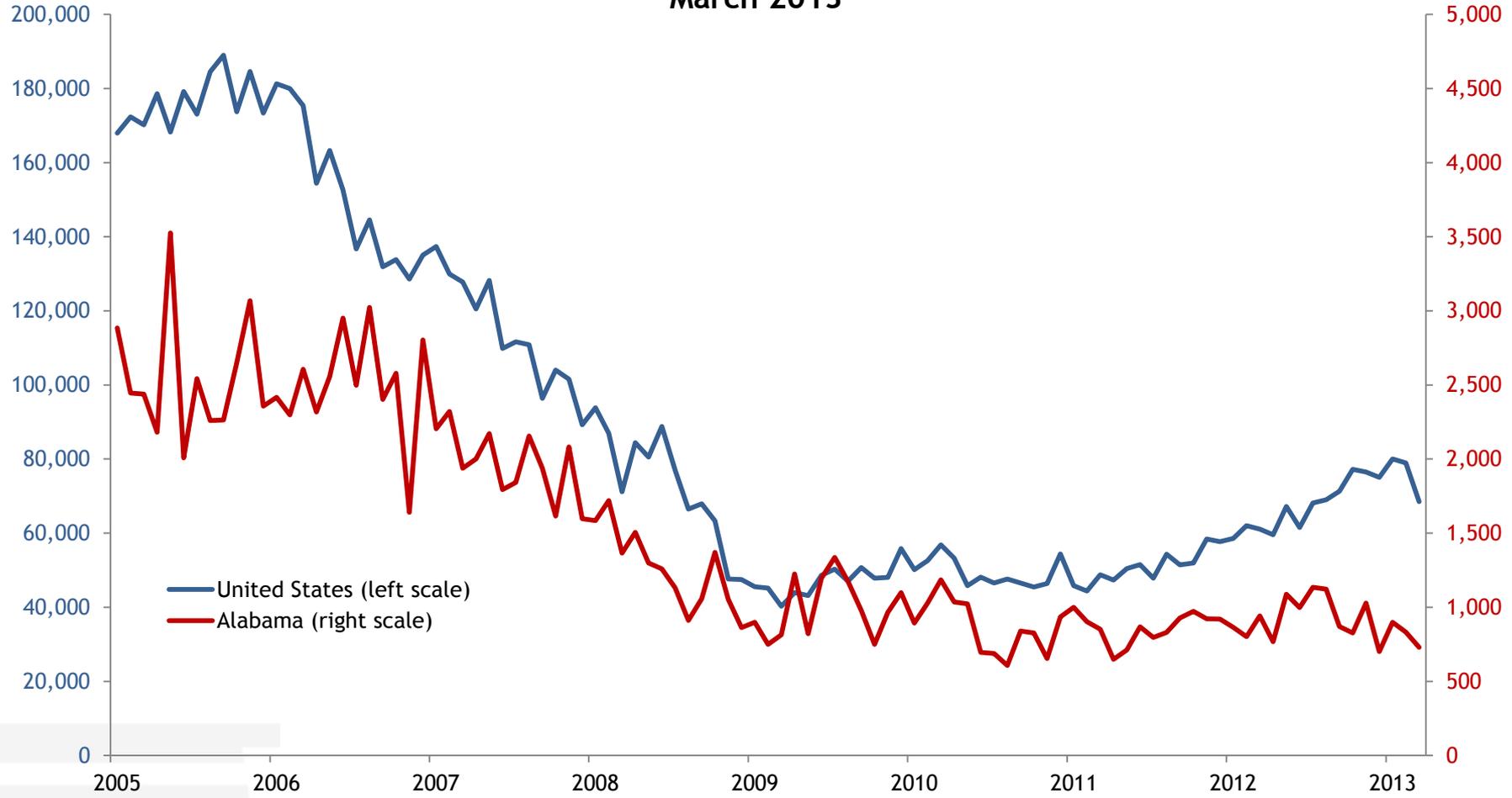
FHFA House Price Index: Q4 2012	1-yr % change	5-yr % change	10-yr % change
USA	0.4	-14.9	15.6
Alabama	-1.1	-7.5	20.2
Anniston-Oxford	0.5	-6.8	16.9
Auburn-Opelika	-2.3	-11.6	20.8
Birmingham	-1.3	-8.8	15.6
Decatur	-1.2	-0.2	18.4
Dothan	-0.5	-9.2	22.3
Florence-Muscle Shoals	1.0	1.4	26.7
Gadsden	-0.7	-3.0	21.8
Huntsville	-0.4	-1.7	27.1
Mobile	-4.4	-16.8	16.2
Montgomery	-3.0	-10.3	12.6
Tuscaloosa	0.9	-0.9	25.2

Source: Federal Housing Finance Agency, Haver Analytics

Source: Federal Housing Finance Agency, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

The number of new home construction permits issued in Alabama has been basically flat and remains near historically low levels of activity.

New Residential Home Construction Permits March 2013



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Haver Analytics

For additional sources of information, see our Local Economic Analysis Research Network membership at www.frbatlanta.org/rein/learn/map/learn_members.cfm.